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THE FREE GERMANY MANIFESTO AND THE GERMAN PEOPLE

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I. SUMMARY

- (1) This memorandum deals exclusively with the reception that the Free German Manifesto is likely to have in Germany. It does not deal with Russian-German relations and the aspirations of Russia in Central Europe. Nor has an attempt been made to study the reception of the Manifesto outside of Germany and among German refugee groups.
- (2) The Manifesto derives its strength from the fact that it offers the German people the prospect of national survival and independence after the termination of the war and the destruction of the Nazi regime. It does so by entrusting the German people itself with the task of overthrowing the Nazi regime and establishing a democratic government.
- (3) The Manifesto combines the democratic appeal with the desire for national self-preservation and independence, thus directing itself to all the potential anti-Nazi forces in Germany.
- (4) While this broad "united front" is not capable of providing a basis for a future Popular Front government in Germany, it may well constitute an effective force for the overthrow of the Nazi regime.
- (5) The democratic conception of the Manifesto contains enough revolutionary implications to re-activate the old left-wing anti-Nazi opposition among the German workers, especially the remnants of the CP.
- (6) The appeal to the longing for national survival and independence has, in conjunction with the genuine anti-Nazi opposition, no nationalistic or imperialistic implications.
- (7) The failure, however, to reach an understanding between the Western powers and Russia on post-war policy may swing the Free Germany movement into an alliance with those circles of the Army Command and the so-called "left-wing" Nazi leadership which prefer collaboration with Russia to British-American occupation. In this case, the Free Germany movement would revitalize "National-Bolshevik" sentiments.
- (8) Such sentiments were strong in the German CP in 1919, 1923 and from 1930-1932. Though the leaders of this line have been killed in Russia, a full-blown National Bolshevism may be used any time to entice the nationalistic youth and the army to join forces with the CP.
- (9) National Bolshevik trends within the Nazi Party are not represented in the present leadership with the possible exception of Erich Koch. The National Bolshevik ideology, however, still has undoubtedly a strong attraction with the youth and the intellectuals.
- (10) Between 1919 and 1933 three trends were operating in German foreign policy: the Western orientation (General Max Hoffmann, Hitler, Rosenberg), the Eastern

orientation (General Von Seeckt, V. Brockdorff-Rantzau, V. Maltzahn), and the bridge theory (Stresemann, Koch-Weser, the Social Democrats). The victory of the bridge theory was short-lived and bound up with a more or less stable political and social system. High officers and many of the conservatives favored, and may still favor, Eastern orientation.

(11) The most influential trend among the German underground movement is apparently towards a democratic socialism that is entirely independent of the Russian system. Only the fear of the dismemberment and enslavement of the Reich could drive the German masses into the Bolshevik camp.

The Manifesto by the National Committee of Free Germany ^{1/} is, if considered divorced from its political surroundings, a document of no prime political significance. Statements on Post-War Germany have been issued by many refugee groups, all of them unimportant. Three facts make this manifesto significant:

1. the backing it apparently received from Soviet Russia ^{2/};
2. the revolutionary implication of the manifesto;
3. its appeal to the desire for national self-preservation.

II. THE CONTENT OF THE MANIFESTO

1. The content of the Manifesto is at first sight not much different from that of the Weimar Constitution of 1919, in spite of the fact that the Manifesto declares that it "will have nothing in common with the helpless Weimar regime". It desires a "strong" government, a "strong democratic power", the "annulment of all laws based on national and racial hatred . . . of all measures of the Hitlerite authorities directed against freedom and human dignity, and the restoration of religious freedom. This means the reactivation of Articles 109 (equality before the law), 114, 115, 117, 118 (freedom of the person, of the home, of communications, of opinion), and Article 135 (of religion). It demands the "restoration and extension of the political rights and social gains of the working people", formerly contained in Articles 159 (freedom of trade union organizations), 165 (cooperation of labor organizations in the administration of the economy), 161 (maintenance of health and capability to work). The Manifesto promises the restoration of the freedom of economy, trade and handicraft; the guaranteed right to labor and to own lawfully acquired property - almost direct quotations from Article 153 (freedom of property), 152 (freedom of trade and industry), 164 (protection of the independent middle classes), 157 (labor power stands under the special protection of the Reich). The Manifesto is thus almost literally a summary of Part Two of the Weimar Constitution entitled "Fundamental Rights and Duties of the Germans", while the basic idea of Part One "Structure and Task of the Reich" is but scantily treated, since there is no mention of parliamentary organs.

2. The Manifesto, however, may have today a much greater significance than the Weimar Constitution ever had in its time.

a) The appeal to democratic memories and principles could by itself hardly have any effect in Germany. P/W interrogations show that only the politically conscious anti-Nazis criticize the regime on social and political grounds. The young generation knows nothing about democracy^{3/}, and the older one is probably still reminiscent of the impotence and failure of the Weimar Republic. The importance of the Manifesto consists in the fact that it shows

^{1/} Full, apparently authentic text in New York Times, August 1, 1943.

^{2/} The Pravda has accepted the manifesto, see Plain Moscow Aug. 2, 1943. This backing may be temporary and may be withdrawn as has been pointed out in report, "The Soviet Union and Free Germany", submitted jointly by the U.S.S.R. Division and Central European Section. This possibility will be discarded here.

^{3/} See especially Hitler: A Survey of P/W Opinion Secret B370 July 29, 1943

the democratic revolution as a way to terminate the war without losing national unity and independence. The Manifesto goes beyond the Unconditional Surrender by implying the preservation of Germany's national unity and sovereignty after the abolition of the Hitler system. In doing so, the Manifesto avoids the gravest mistake of our PW against Germany, namely, the failure to show the German people a way of terminating the war and overthrowing the Nazi regime without surrendering its national independence to a foreign conqueror. The Manifesto makes an ingenious use of our failure by telling the Germans that, if they continue to submit to Hitler, they will be inevitably defeated by our growing military power: "Hitler then will be overthrown only by the force of the coalition armies. But this will signify the end of our national independence and of our state existence, the dismemberment of our fatherland." If, on the other hand, the German people does not wait until the Wehrmacht is beaten, if the German army keeps its arms and turns them against the Nazi regime, it will, in beating Hitler, at the same time beat the enemies: the United Nations would not invade a democratic Germany which has eradicated the Nazi system. The fight against Hitler is thus presented as a fight for Germany's national self-preservation, as a war of social and national liberation.

b) The democratic appeal of the Manifesto is, however, not only tied up with the longing for national self-preservation, but also with the desire for far-reaching social changes. Every vestige of Marxism is carefully avoided, but the Manifesto has nevertheless definite revolutionary implications, which obtain additional weight through the Communist signers of the document. These implications are revealed in the sentences on the "confiscation of property of those responsible for the war and of the war profiteers," on the punishment of the instigators, ringleaders, and accomplices "behind the scene," in the appeal to the "working men and women on all fronts," in the exhortation to organize "fighting groups at the enterprises, in the villages, in the labor camps, in the universities." They are furthermore indicated by the explicit statement that the future German democracy "will have nothing in common with the helpless Weimar regime."

c) The Manifesto thus combines the national and the revolutionary appeal on a democratic basis, thereby utilizing the strongest interests and desires prevalent among the potential anti-Nazi opposition. In doing so, the Manifesto directs itself to the following groups:

3.

a) the workers, especially the politically trained older workers who will have no difficulties in recognizing the revolutionary content in the nationalistic form,

b) the small peasants, who have become increasingly resentful of the totalitarian regimentation of agriculture,

c) those strata of the middle classes which have been proletarianized in the process of total mobilization,

d) a large part of the intelligentsia,

e) the common soldiers,

f) certain high army circles which are favoring an understanding with Russia rather than with the Western powers (in this group might be included

the so-called "left wing" of the Nazi leadership and the SS).

There can be no doubt that these groups cannot form the basis for a future democratic government in Germany. The diverging interests of the workers, the middle classes, the officer corps, and the "left-wing" Nazi leadership cannot be united after the breakdown of the Nazi system any more than under the Weimar Republic. Consequently, the Manifesto refrains from any too explicit revival of the Popular Front conception and limits the "united front" to the task of overthrowing the Nazi regime. With this limitation, however, the Manifesto and the policy suggested by it is bound to have a considerable effect on all the beforementioned groups, chiefly on account of its emphasis on national self-preservation.

The appeal to national self-preservation is by no means an appeal to imperialistic or nationalistic tendencies. The protest against dismemberment of the old Reich (the Manifesto proclaims the renunciation of all conquests) and the insistence on national unity and sovereignty will be readily accepted even by the Socialist and Communist opposition. The Marxian tradition is probably still alive among the older generation of German workers, and in this tradition, national independence is one of the preconditions of social progress. The German people - like all civilized people - regard this right as an integral part of the right to shape its own destiny. The idea of national independence arose with the idea of democracy, and precisely the democratic forces have most strongly insisted on its realization. The United States and Great Britain have been considered in Germany as the model countries where democracy and national unity have been achieved. We can hardly blame the democratic forces in Germany for adhering to an ideal which we ourselves have realized and promoted. If this ideal is taken over and implemented by the genuine anti-Nazi opposition, there is no danger of its being abused for imperialistic aggression. Imperialistic nationalism is the characteristic of certain social groups whose interests are dependent on aggressive expansion (mainly the monopolistic strata of German industry, the Junkers and militarists); it is not to them that the Manifesto appeals; it rather calls for their "punishment" as the war profiteers and instigators.

4. There is one aspect of the Manifesto, however, which sounds a different appeal. It is directed not only to the German people but also to the British and American statesmen, challenging them to come out with a declaration of post-war policy toward Europe. If an understanding between the Western Powers and Russia cannot be reached, the "Free Germany" movement may become an instrument for power politics. The Manifesto contains a clear indication of that, in appealing to those army and party circles which may prefer a German-Russian coalition to British-American occupation. If the United Nations do not succeed in allying themselves with the genuinely anti-Nazi opposition in Germany, if they do not give the German people the chance of social as well as political reconstruction as a free democratic nation, then the Manifesto might easily become the first attempt to create a "National-Solchevik" regime in Germany. For that it could revitalize a significant political trend on the Left as well as on the Right in Germany.

III. THE NATIONAL BOLSHEVIST TRADITION

National Bolshevism has two origins, one in the Communist Party, the other in the nationalistic organizations, especially the Free Corps. The first used nationalism as a means to seduce the nationalist youth into the communist camps, the second to draw communists into the nationalistic ranks.

1. National Bolshevism in the Communist Party

a) National Bolshevik trends became apparent at the time of the discussion of the Versailles Treaty. On May 13, 1919, the Comintern issued a manifesto entitled "Down with the Versailles Treaty". 1/ The CP leadership, especially Paul Levi and Karl Radek 2/ were compelled to attack the already existing trends towards National Bolshevism which became especially apparent in the Hamburg CP. 3/ Under Paul Levi's influence the ultra-Left (the National Bolsheviks and Syndicalists) was compelled to leave the party as an aftermath to the second illegally held party conference of the CP. Under his influence participation in the elections was decided and direct revolutionary action as advocated by the Hamburg group was rejected. The ultra Left opposition under the leadership of Laufenberg and Wolfheim formed the KAPD (Communist Workers Party of Germany) and soon lost influence completely. The eliminated radicals found, however, entrance into the CP when the party became what was then called a "revolutionary mass party." Though it is not our task to show the many changes through which the policy of the CP passed, a few incidents must be mentioned.

b) The National Bolshevik trends became predominant in 1923, a year characterized by two major events: the occupation of the Ruhr and the inflation. The slogan of the CP then was "Beat Poincare on the Ruhr and Cuno on the Spree". 4/ The fight of the CP was thus directed against French imperialism and the cabinet of Chancellor Cuno, who was undoubtedly a representative of German shipping and industrial interests. Actually, however, the CP directed its attack almost exclusively against France and supported the passive resistance of the German people. This was in line with Soviet Russia's foreign policy after the conclusion of the Rapallo treaty with Germany. Soviet Russia considered England and France as the protagonists of anti-Russian interventionism. The Comintern as well as the Central Executive Committee of the Russian CP thus protested against the Reich occupation. 5/ It is during that time that

1/ See Die Internationale, Vol. I, No. 11/12, pp. 244 seq.

2/ Die Internationale, Vol. I, No. 4, pp. 3 seq.

3/ See Arnold Struthahn, "Die Auswaertige Politik des deutschen Kommunismus und der Hamburger Nationale Bolshevismus" in Die Internationale, Vol. I, Nos. 17 and 18, pp. 340.

4/ See Rakosi in "Jahrbuch fuer Wirtschaft, Politik und Arbeiterbewegung" 1923-24 (official publication of the CP), Hamburg, 1924, pp. 17, and Thalheimer, pp. cit. p. 601.

5/ See Russian Information Review, Vol. 2, 1922-23, p. 244.

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within the Communist Party the idea arose that Germany was a suppressed country and that consequently the Communists must assume the leadership in the struggle for national liberation. The CP deputy Dengel stated while surveying the political situation in 1923 in the 11th Party Congress of 1927 that a just war of national liberation would have been possible in 1923. 1/ In the course of the inflation, political and social antagonisms deepened in Germany. The petty bourgeois wavered, according to Communist conceptions, between Fascist and Communist sympathies. 2/

The CP believed that the time of a new revolution had arrived, and from the summer of 1923 on it became the rallying point of all discontented masses. Thousands entered the Communist Party. It is in these circumstances that the National Bolshevik theory and tactics were adopted. Rakosi praised it in 1923. 3/ Radek delivered a speech at the occasion of Schlageter's execution by the French. It is worthwhile remembering that Schlageter is one of the Nazis' most celebrated national heroes. Radek said: "The history of this martyr of German nationalism shall not be clothed in silence nor shall it be settled with a slighting phrase . . . Schlageter, the courageous soldier of the counter-revolution, deserves honor in a manly and honorable fashion by us soldiers of the revolution. . . . Only an alliance with the German working classes can liberate Germany from the yoke of imperialism." 4/

Radek's speech became the starting point for the National Bolshevik campaign. Count Reventlow was invited to write in the *Rote Fahne*. Lower CP officials went so far as to publish posters adorned with the Soviet star and the swastika and invited Nazis to speak in Communist meetings. Ruth Fischer, then a member of the Executive Committee of the CP, addressed the nationalist students in Berlin in the following way: "The German Reich . . . can be saved only if you, gentlemen of the German racial groups, recognize that you must fight jointly with the masses organized in the CP". She continued, "Whoever attacks Jewish capital . . . is already a class fighter even if he doesn't know it . . . Crush the Jewish capitalists, hang them on the lamp-posts, trample them". She ended by saying, "French imperialism is now the greatest danger in the world. France is a country of reaction. The German people can drive French capital from the Ruhr only in an alliance with Russia." 5/ The campaign had no success and the National Bolshevik line was dropped. It did not become a predominant feature of Communist policy until the very end of the Weimar Republic.

c) The elections of 1930 showed the growth of National Socialism, and the Communist Party desperately sought for a new political line which would allow them to counteract the growing influence of the National Socialist Party on the masses. The leadership went to Heinz Neumann, the most irresponsible Communist leader. Neumann directed the attack of the Communist Party almost exclusively against the Social Democrats who were labeled as

1/ Minutes of the Party Congress of 1927, p. 303.

2/ Thalheimer in "Jahrbuch fuer Wirtschaft, Politik und Arbeiterbewegung," 1923-24, p. 598.

3/ "Jahrbuch fuer Wirtschaft, Politik und Arbeiterbewegung", 1923-24, p. 26.

4/ Quoted by Georg Schwarz, *Voelker, Hoeret, die Zentrale*. KPD Bankrott, Berlin, 1933, p. 91.

5/ See Schwarz, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

"Social Fascists." Slogans like "Drive the Social Fascists from their positions in the plants and factories", "Beat the Social Fascists" were formulated. Thaelmann himself said "Without being victorious in the fight against the social democracies, we shall not be able to beat Fascism". 1/ The Executive Committee of the CP adopted as late as September 1932 an anti-socialdemocratic resolution. 2/

At the same time the National Bolshevik line was rejuvenated under the auspices of Heinz Neumann. He addressed a Goebbels meeting in Berlin in the following way: "Young Socialists! Brave fighters for the nation! The Communists do not desire fraternal strife with the National Socialists." 3/ This time the Communists were successful to some extent. Lieutenant Scherlinger, whom the Supreme Court had sentenced to imprisonment for National Socialist activities within the army, was converted to Communism primarily under the influence of his fellow prisoner, the Communist Captain, Ludwig Renn. 4/ A number of other officers, especially of the Free Corps Bund Oberland, also joined the CP.

The election manifesto of the Communist Party published on August 24, 1930 begins with the following words: "We shall tear up the thievish Versailles 'Peace Treaty' and the Young Plan which enslaved Germany. We shall annul all international debts and reparation payments". The manifesto ends with the words, "Down with the Young Plan! Down with the government of the capitalists and Junkers! Down with Fascism and social democracy! Long live the dictatorship of the Proletariat! Long live Soviet Germany!" The manifesto insists on the socialization of heavy industry, banks, large estates and big traders and officers, and on a union of all toiling masses on the basis of the broadest possible soviet democracy.

In his speech before the Executive Committee of the CP, April and May 1931, the then Party leader Thaelmann declared that the whole tradition of the CP was permeated by its fight against Versailles. He reminded the listeners of the policy of the Spartakus union and of the Ruhr struggle of 1923 and he did not concede a contradiction between the struggle for national liberation and proletarian internationalism. 5/

In February 1932 at the meeting of the Central Committee Thaelmann reiterated the position of the Communist Party in the following manner: "We are the sole party in Germany which really and with the greatest determination fights against the policy of fulfillment. . . . National liberation cannot be divorced from the social liberation of the toiling people, that is from the overthrow of capitalism. . . . One cannot fight against the Versailles system if one engages in violent baiting of the only government in the world which did not sign the shameful Versailles treaty. . . . The Hitler party will become the direct ally of Pilsudski's Poland which with her policy of the

1/ Die Internationale, Vol. 14, p. 492.

2/ Resolution of the Twelfth Ekki Plenum in Die Internationale, Vol. 15, p. 334.

3/ Schwarz, op. cit., p. 206.

4/ He is now one of the main members of the Free Germany movement in Mexico. He is an outstanding novelist and writer on military affairs. Renn is a pen name. He belongs to the German nobility.

5/ See Peter Maslowski, Thaelmann, Leipzig, 1932, p. 77.

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Polish Corridor and in Upper Silesia where she enslaves and tortures German workers and peasants. . . . One cannot fight against the Versailles Treaty and the Young slavery without unfurling the banner of proletarian internationalism." 1/

d) This National Bolshevik approach was superseded by the doctrine of the "people's revolution" shortly before Hitler's access to power. This doctrine is outwardly incompatible with the old Bolshevik theory that revolutions are prepared by small groups of determined professional revolutionaries. The doctrine of the people's revolution, however, must be considered as a forerunner of the Manifesto of the Free Germany Committee. This doctrine was proclaimed for the first time in 1931. "The Communist Party . . . must organize the people's revolution against Fascism and economic castigation - that is its historic task." 2/ The program of the people's revolution, so another manifesto said, "will bring liberty to the toiling peasants." 3/

The crowning tactical step of the people's revolution doctrine was the Referendum in the summer of 1931 for the dissolution of the Prussian Diet with the aim of overthrowing the social democratic government of Braun and Severing. Though the Communist Party originally opposed the initiative sponsored by Nazis, Nationalists, and the Steel Helmet, Heinz Neumann succeeded in bringing the Communist Party behind the National opposition. Remmele, his second in command, 4/ supported Neumann. Thaelmann against his better insight was compelled to defend the inglorious Referendum.

Only in October 1932 did the Thaelmann group begin to attack the National Bolshevik line and the doctrine of the people's revolution. 5/

e) The Russians have killed almost all the advocates of this National Bolshevik line - Heinz Neumann, Remmele, Max Hoelz - and have thus shown, from 1933 to 1941, to have definitely rejected the National Bolshevik theory. Only in November 1932 was there a mass manifestation of Bolshevik and Nazi solidarity. The Berlin Transport Workers struck. The Social Democratic Trade Union outlawed the strike but the National Socialist Workers Cell Organization (N.S.B.O.) together with the Red Trade Union Opposition, carried the strike, supported it and succeeded in organizing sympathy of almost the whole Berlin population.

f) It follows from the above that the Communist Party has frequently attempted to exploit the nationalist traditions and longings among huge groups of the German people especially among the army and the intellectuals. It was unsuccessful from 1919 to 1933 because the Nationalists preferred to join the Nazi Party which, due to its predominantly nationalistic appeal, appeared to be a much more effective guardian of nationalistic aspirations. But the Nazi Party is in a state of disintegration and its power will decline with the decline of Germany's military fortunes. It is not impossible that this collapse of the Nazi Party may enable the Communist Party to organize better than ever before the genuine nationalistic passion inherent in the German youth, the German intelligentsia and the professional soldiers and officers.

1/ Maslowski, op. cit., p. 88

2/ Die Internationale, Vol. 13, p. 584.

3/ Maslowski, op. cit. p. 79.

4/ Remmele has been executed by the G.P.U. in Russia together with Heinz Neumann.

5/ See Thaelmann in Die Internationale, Vol. 15, p. 386.

2. National Bolshevik Trends in the Nazi Movement

a) National Bolshevik trends are not represented in the present Nazi leadership. It can even be said without exaggeration that Hitler established his total control over the Party primarily by the ruthless elimination of those who adhered to this doctrine that appeared to him the greatest impediment to the seizure, maintenance, and strengthening of the Party's control over the German Reich. It has elsewhere been pointed out ^{1/} that the turning point in the strategy of the Nazi Party was the fiasco of the Munich Putsch of 1923. The failure of this attempted overthrow of the established government by means of violence taught Hitler a lesson which he never forgot, the lesson, namely, that the Nazi Party can come to power only with the assistance of the most powerful ruling groups in Germany through Parliamentary processes. The subsequent history of National Socialism has amply demonstrated his conviction that he can retain power only by letting the ruling groups share in the spoils of peaceful and warlike exploitation of the German masses as well as those of occupied Europe. This insight led Hitler to a ruthless war against those who advocated some kind of a National Bolshevik program.

b) It is commonly believed that Goebbels and Ley are the two spokesmen of the so-called radical wing in the Nazi Party, a wing that would not hesitate to resort to Socialist and even Bolshevik measures if the power of the Nazi Party could thereby be maintained.

It is quite true that when Goebbels started his career within the Nazi Party he joined forces with Gregor Strasser, the leader of the Political Organization of the Party. Jointly with Gregor Strasser, Goebbels created and edited a semi-monthly periodical "Nationalsozialistische Briefe" (National Socialist Letters), not designed for public consumption. The first issue appeared on October 1, 1925, and the slogan was the "Reconciliation of Socialism with the East." The program of this group was formulated by Goebbels in the middle of 1925 in an article in the Voelkischer Beobachter ^{2/}, where the following statement appeared: "The future lies with the dictatorships of the Socialist idea." The Strasser-Goebbels group attacked Rosenberg's anti-Russian and anti-Semitic conceptions. It demanded eastern orientation of the Nazi Party, opposition to American and English imperialism and assistance to Russia's fight against this imperialism. Germany's place was on the side of Russia, Turkey, China, India, in short on the side of all those people which are hostile to Versailles. Russia therefore is the natural ally of Germany and it is nobody's concern how Russia is internally governed.

These views were supported by Gregor Strasser's brother, Otto Strasser, and by Count Reventlow, who belonged to the Deutsch Voelkische Freiheitspartei which had formed an alliance with the Nazi Party in March 1923.

c) The occasion for dealing the first blow to the National Bolshevik trend within the party was the Communist sponsored referendum for the expropriation of the princely houses. On February 14, 1925, Hitler called a

^{1/} Franz Neumann, Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism, New York, 1942, p. 41 and 42.

^{2/} Konrad Heiden, Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus, Berlin, 1933, p. 202, 203.

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meeting of the party leaders to Bamberg. The northern Gaue were represented only by Gregor Strasser and Goebbels. Hitler succeeded, in spite of Strasser's opposition to commit the party to wholesale opposition to the Communist initiative by depicting it as Jewish engineered. Goebbels used this occasion to desert Strasser and to swing over entirely to Hitler's side. From that day on Goebbels as well as Ley have consistently followed Hitler's directives and that day created the deadly enmity between Goebbels and the Strasser brothers which led ultimately to Gregor Strasser's assassination on June 30, 1934. The Arbeitsgemeinschaft of the northern Gaue was dissolved.

d) The fight between the two wings, especially between the Strasser group and the Hitler majority, is well known. While Gregor Strasser finally accepted the leadership of Hitler, his brother Otto Strasser did not. He founded the "Fighting Community of Revolutionary National Socialists," later called Black Front, and submitted to the German public "Fourteen Theses of the German Revolution." 1/ These theses, though outwardly socialistic, do not contain any foreign political program except the demand for the unification of all Germans and the destruction of the Versailles Treaty. Otto Strasser has, however, exposed his foreign political views in his book "Structure of German Socialism" to which his famous discussion with Hitler is appended. 2/

The handing over of the trade unions to Ley's Labor Front instead of to the NSBO; the elimination of Roehm; the decline of the SA, -- all these are steps in the eradication of the so-called "socialist", that is National - Bolshevik wing of the Nazi Party.

The National Bolshevik doctrine had a deep fascination especially for nationalistic intellectuals. The most articulate post-war nationalist, Moeller von den Bruck, espouses these ideas in his Das Dritte Reich, (3rd edition, Hamburg, 1931), and in his lesser known but possibly more important book "Das Recht der Jungen Voelker". 3/ The only novelist of repute that National Socialism has produced, Ernst Juenger 4/ must be considered as the pathbreaker of National Bolshevism. 5/

The collapse of the Nazi system will again bring to the fore National Bolshevik trends that have heretofore been suppressed by the Nazi leaders.

The problem which the Nationalist movement faced in 1918 and 1919 will arise again. To the genuine Nationalist youth in Germany the solution of the problem after the defeat of National Socialism will be very different from what it has been after 1918. The Nationalist groups may point to the enormous internal and external strength of Bolshevik Russia. They may attribute this strength to the fact that the bourgeoisie has been eliminated in Russia and that, while the Nazis talk about the people's community, the Russians have established it by the extermination of their own industrialists, bankers, Junkers and middle classes. These groups, therefore, may attempt to

1/ Published in Mommsen and Franz, Die deutschen Parteiprogramme, Vol. III, Leipzig, 1931, pp. 116-117.

2/ Otto Strasser, Aufbau des Deutschen Sozialismus, 2nd edition, Prague, 1936, pp. 88-89.

3/ 1919, especially p. 101.

4/ Der Arbeiter, Herrschaft und Gestalt, 2nd edition, Hamburg, 1932.

5/ See also Franz Neumann, op. cit. pp. 139 to 199.

ally themselves with the German working classes, hoping to swing them into Nationalistic directions. They will strive to bring about a reconciliation of Nationalism and Bolshevism and they will orient their policy towards an understanding with Russia, hoping that with Russia's backing Germany can be restored to the position of a great power.

To sum up: although the National Bolchevik leadership in the Communist as well as in the National Socialist Party has been exterminated, a situation may well arise in which National Bolshevism ideas may again receive a powerful stimulus. Such a situation will occur if, after the breakdown of the Nazi regime, conditions are imposed upon Germany which will destroy her unity and independence as a nation. In this case, the German nationalists may succeed in exploiting the sentiments and desires of the German masses for a National Bolshevism policy. It is reported that, in anticipation of such a situation, important Nazi groups, especially among the SS, are already infiltrating into the Communist centers of resistance.

IV. THE ATTITUDE TOWARDS RUSSIA

1. Apart from the National Bolshevism tradition predominant in the radical Communist movement and among the nationalistic organizations, there is a very powerful pro-Russian trend which is quite independent of the internal structure of Russia. It is well known that for the conservatives the re-insurance treaty between Germany and Russia concluded between Bismarck and Schouvaloff on June 18, 1887 ^{1/} was the cornerstone of the conservative foreign policy and that the conservative opposition never forgave William II not to have renewed the re-insurance treaty.

At the end of the World War 1914-1918 three foreign political trends became apparent in Germany, the Eastern orientation, the Western orientation and the so-called Bridge theory. For the easterners, friendly relations with Russia were to enable Germany to get rid of the Versailles Treaty and to establish herself as a great power. To the westerners, the entrance of Germany in the concert of Western Powers was to provide the same result. The adherents of the third theory conceived Germany as a bridge between eastern and western Europe and hoped by careful juggling between the East and the West, by playing off Russia against France and England to achieve concession after concession.

2. The western orientation stems from Frederick List. ^{2/} It found its most powerful expression in the writings of General Hoffmann. ^{3/} According to Hoffman, the basic fact which the great powers in the world have to face is the crisis of industrialism intensified by Russia's elimination from the world economy and Bolshevism's fight against the fundamental interests of capitalistic society. The solution therefore is the destruction of Bolshevism and the re-integration of Russia into a world economy based on world economic collaboration and political integration of Germany, Great Britain, and France. ^{4/}

^{1/} Text in Pribram, *The Secret Treaties of Austria and Hungary*, Vol. I, p. 275.

^{2/} See on his doctrine Franz Neumann, pp. cit., pp. 105-106.

^{3/} Nowak (ed.) *Die Aufzeichnungen des Generals Max Hoffmann* (1929).

^{4/} Especially Vol. II, pp. 365-367.

Hoffmann desired to this end the financial and economic cooperation of the United States. It is this thesis which went into Hitler's "Mein Kampf" and into Alfred Rosenberg's mythology. It amounted to the suggestion of establishing a huge world trust directed against Soviet Russia.

4. This western school was, however, violently opposed by the army leadership, and by a number of industrialists and diplomats.

The position of the German army towards foreign policy has been formulated with utmost clarity in General Von Seeckt's book, "Germany between East and West." 1/ Seeckt considers the west, especially France, to be Germany's natural enemy. He therefore advocates collaboration with Russia in spite of all differences in internal systems and ideologies. There are, he says, "no antagonisms between Germany and Russia based on geography, history, and race." Russian State Socialism is "a purely internal affair". He advocates that German business expands into Russia and that it becomes "indispensable and liked in Russia". Bolshevism, he adds, is a "purely Russian product". "Bolshevism in Russia will not break down if we dissolve the treaties of Rapallo and Berlin; but we shall then have an enemy on our border whose impact on our internal situation will not be less . . . Our attitude towards Bolshevism has nothing to do with the possibility of economic and political cooperation". He is afraid of Germany's isolation and he believes that Germany will have to face two enemies if her political relations with Russia are not friendly. "We address German politicians: Keep me the back free."

There are many more of such proponents. 2/ It is well known that Count von Brockdorff-Rantzau passionately desired the alliance with Russia in order to fight the Treaty of Versailles and resigned office when he did not succeed in convincing the Weimar coalition, Social Democrats, Catholics and Democrats. Baron von Maltzahn, the head of the eastern department in the German Foreign Office, was a well known partisan of Seeckt and Brockdorff-Rantzau. Other German diplomats shared this view such as the well known Richard von Kuehlmann. 3/

The geo-politicians, whose influence on German foreign policy is, however, greatly over-estimated, were in favor of Russian-German collaboration, and Karl Haushofer has, during the German-Russian non-aggression pact, re-formulated the idea of the joint organization of the Russian-German space. 4/

4. It was the Social Democrats and the Liberals who sought to incorporate Germany into the concert of the Western Powers without alienating Soviet Russia. It is characteristic, however, that this policy could be carried out only during the time when the Weimar Republic appeared to be stabilized. Streseman 5/ repudiated "the thesis that German foreign policy must have either a western or an eastern orientation." Erich Koch-Weser, the spokesman

1/ Deutschland zwischen West und Ost, 1933, especially pp. 31-41.

2/ See especially Wheeler-Bennett, From "Brest-Litovsk to Brest-Litovsk" in Foreign Affairs, 1939-1940, p. 196.

3/ Thoughts on Germany, 1932, pp. 310 and 311.

4/ Der Kontinentalblock (1941), pp. 15-16.

5/ Vermaechtnis, Vol. II, pp. 93-94.

of the German Democratic Party, 3/ took Streseman's position and insisted that Germany's task is "to be the bridge between the east and the west." He expressly repudiated the eastern orientation. "It is impossible for Germany to carry out a policy of resistance against the west trusting in Russian assistance. Today Russia is not up to such a task. Should we be drawn, however, into a war between Russia and the Western Powers, a Russian victory may bring us freedom against the West but the inundation and subjugation by Bolshevism". The third conception of Germany's foreign policy, the bridge thesis, is today probably that doctrine which has the least support since liberalism in Germany, never powerful in history, has today but little appeal. It is known that Streseman lacked support even by his own party and that his major support came from the Social Democratic party.

If the United Nations do not come out with a united policy Germany will again be compelled to choose between the east and the west. The eastern orientation has always been strong among the high officer corps and among the conservatives, but even groups in heavy industry which considered England to be the main competitor were striving for friendly relations with Russia. 2/

V. THE STRENGTH OF COMMUNISM AND OF OTHER ANTI-NAZI GROUPS

1. The last free Reichstag elections in Germany were held on November 6, 1932.

The result was:

	(NSDAP	196 deputies
Right	(Nationalists	52
	(German Peoples Party	11
	(Bavarian Peoples Party	20
Center	(Center Party	70
	(Democratic Party	2
	(Social Democrats	121
Left	(Communists	100

The elections of March 5, 1933 were no longer free. Terror had already started. The whole Communist and Socialdemocratic press was banned, and many communist deputies were either in SA barracks or in exile. Still the elections showed the following picture:

-
- 1/ "Deutschlands Aussenpolitik in der Nachkriegszeit," in Harms (ed.):
Volk und Reich der Deutschen, vol. 3 (1929), pp. 182-183.
 2/ See the discussion in Franz Neumann, op. cit., pp. 203-210.

	(NSDAP	288
Right(	Nationalists	52
	(German Peoples Party	2
	(Bavarian Peoples Party	18
Center(	Center Party	74
	(Democratic Party	5
	(Social Democrats	120
Left(	Communists	81

2. The number of communist voters in the last six months of the Weimar Republic was thus around six million. This figure is, however, highly deceptive, since the communist vote was subject to great fluctuations and corresponded in no way to the actual strength of the Party proper. Official communist estimates of party membership 1/ were as follows:

1919 -	90,000
1920 -	50,000 (KAPD - 38,000)
1921 -	73,000
1922 -	380,000
1923 -	267,000
1924 -	180,000
1927 -	150,000
1928 -	130,000
1930 -	120,000
1931 -	200,000
1932 -	320,000 <u>2/</u>

The CP has thus never been able to organize a considerable part of the working classes. The influence of the CP, however, went far beyond the membership, especially when the late Kurt Muenzenberg was put in charge of CP propaganda and covered Germany with a network of transmission-belt organizations.

3. The membership of the SPD vacillated around 1,000,000, 3/ but the SPD could count on the support of the Free (Socialdemocratic) Trade Unions. 4/ The Social Democratic Party, however, was in reality weak. It held no attraction for the youth. In 1930, the age composition of the SPD was:

1/ Walter Rist, "Der Weg der KPD" in Neue Blaetter Fuer den Sozialismus, vol. III 1932, pp. 79-91.

2/ This figure is questionable. It is quoted by Pjatnitzki, Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz, 1932, No. 32.

3/ 1,008,953 in 1931 see Jahrbuch der Deutschen Sozialdemokratie, 1931, Berlin, 1932, p. 109.

4/ 1931: 4,700,000 members.

25 years and under	7.82 percent
26-30 years	10.34 "
31-40 "	26.47 "
41-50 "	27.28 "
51-60 "	19.57 "
60-70 "	7.16 "
over 70 "	1.34 " 1/

The CP, on the other hand, had a great attraction for the youth and communist youth organizations (apart from the religious ones) were the only ones that allowed to the youth a broad enough field for activities.

4. There are other considerable differences. The dissolution of the SPD and of the trade unions came as an unexpected blow to the leadership which had done nothing to prepare for underground activities. The Executive Committee of the SPD had even refused to entertain such ideas as late as March 1933, while the Trade Union leadership tried to make peace with the new Nazi rulers.^{2/} The CP, on the other hand, at once started its underground activities for which it was trained many years ago and for which it had skilled Russian assistance.

Under the Nazi regime, the fates of the Social Democracy and of the CP were utterly different. The Social Democratic membership displayed considerable resistance against the pressure of Nazism. No SPD and no union leader of repute has joined the Nazis, ^{3/} and the older ranks of the memberships were almost immune to the lure of Nazism.

5. Some Communists, however, joined the Nazi movement, especially members of the RFB, the Red Front Fighting League, which was shot through with gangsters. On the other hand, the underground CP organization was the most active underground movement.

Ps/W interrogations indicate:

- a. that the CP underground still is the most important organization;
- b. that the Communist Youth Organization is still the most active youth underground;
- c. that, however, Gestapo agents have found entrance into the CP underground. ^{4/}

While the CP thus is the best organized and strongest underground group in Germany, the appeal of Russian Communism has not increased and may even have decreased.

^{1/} Jahrbuch der Deutschen Sozialdemokratie, 1930.

^{2/} Neumann, op. cit., pp. 413-414.

^{3/} There are but a few exceptions, mostly from the ADGB, the Federation of Socialist Unions, and then not leaders but employees, and from the white collar unions, also employees.

^{4/} See i.e. OSS document L 13297 and the study of the Central European Section of the OSS, July 20, 1943, Report on Prisoner of War Interrogations: Opposition to the Nazis.

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5. The esteem for Communism among the German workers rose considerably during the Spanish Civil War - a crucial period in Europe; it declined sharply during the German-Russian non-aggression pact, and climbed steeply with the decline of Germany's military fortunes on her Eastern Front.

These pro-Soviet sentiments are, however, counteracted by two basic factors: the low esteem in which the CP leadership is held ^{1/} and the fear of Russian domination over Germany. This fear is probably the most important single psychological factor inside of Germany. It has two causes:

1. the feeling of guilt; and
2. the fear of economic reparations.

Nazi terror in occupied territories aims not only at intimidating the opposition but at making all Germans participate in the commission of terror acts so as to create a collective feeling of guilt and collective responsibility for crimes. ^{2/} The Nazis have largely succeeded in this and Ps/W interrogation abounds in statements that the Germans fight supremely well in Russia because they are afraid of retribution for their crimes.

They are also afraid of the post-war period. "Enjoy the War, Peace will be terrible" is a famous German slogan. This applies to the relations with Russia even more than to those with the Allies. The destruction wrought in occupied Russia must be paid some day by Germany. How can it be paid - so they may argue - except by German slave labor if Germany's industrial equipment should be badly damaged by air attacks?

The Manifesto tries to allay these fears.

6. The SP and Trade Union leaderships are probably the most discredited leaderships of any German democratic organization. The SPD and the trade unions wielded power - the CP not. The SPD ruled Prussia until July 20, 1932; it continually boasted of its strength. ^{3/} It was the only great party fully committed to the defense of the Republic. The Weimar Republic may even be considered the creation of the SPD. And yet it failed completely to adopt its policy to the new requirements.

This does not mean that the democratic spirit is dead. The idea of a democratic socialism exists, and may now be stronger than it ever was. ^{4/} There certainly will have arisen a new leadership among the many localized groups in Germany not burdened by the failure of the old leadership.

The SPD and trade union influence in Germany must not be under-estimated for another reason, though the SPD groups may be much less organized than the CP. The age composition of the SP may even prove to be advantageous

^{1/} See sources on preceding page.

^{2/} See OSS Central European Section "The Nazi Defeat in Tunisia, the Coming Invasion of Europe and our FW."

^{3/} See F. Neumann, op. cit. p. 412/3.

^{4/} See the above mentioned Ps/W interrogations.

today. Of 28,000,000 workers and salaried employees employed today approximately 11,200,000 are foreign workers, which leaves approximately 17,000,000 Germans. Of these, at least 11,000,000 are women, which leaves only 6,000,000 male Germans. Among these, the huge majority are 40 years and over; that would cover the age groups 31-50 years mentioned on p. 30, that is, those age groups which are most strongly imbued by the Social Democratic tradition. But numerical strength is not identical with real strength. The Communist groups in Germany are certainly small, probably not exceeding 30,000 - 40,000. But their thorough indoctrination, their tight organization and the backing that they may obtain from Russia - all this makes them the potential leaders in the period of military and political collapse. Spontaneous uprisings are of great importance, but spontaneity evaporates if it is not channelled into an organization and a definite policy. Today, the Communist groups are potential leaders of the spontaneous opposition in Germany. This idea which has been insisted upon by the Central European Section time and again is confirmed by Ps/W interrogations.

The fear of Soviet Russia will then be subordinated to the desire to remain an independent nation and to assure to the Germans an adequate standard of living, political, social and economic security.

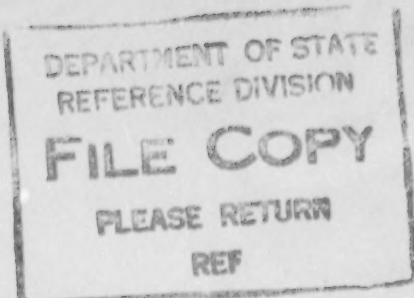
7. Many of the industrialists must realize that a victory of Great Britain and the United States may mean the end of Germany's industrial expansion and may even lead to a considerable contraction of economic activities. High officers may realize that with the economic isolation of Germany her military destruction is indissolubly bound up. Without an expanding economy modern armies cannot be maintained. The army may again become a small professional army without adequate combat weapons. Industrialists and high officers, however, may be convinced that Russia may not desire a Communist Germany for reasons which cannot be discussed here but that an alliance with Russia may give to German industry considerable opportunities for expansion. The officers' corps may convince itself that Russia may desire a strong Germany against possible intervention by France, England and America. If England and America should support Poland's claims for Germany's Eastern provinces, these groups will still more be driven into the camp of Russia hoping to avert the dismemberment of Germany by placing themselves wholly at Russia's disposal.

It follows from the above that there is no pro-Russian sentiment among the large masses of the people, that Communist sympathizers, Social Democrats and Catholics and liberals would prefer leadership by the Allied powers than submission to Russia, provided that this leadership does not destroy Germany's national unity and independence.

There is much less resistance to cooperation with Soviet Russia among groups of German industries and the high officers' corps.

In default of such leadership all groups with the possible exception of practicing Catholics and Junkers, will try to establish cooperation with Soviet Russia basing their policy on the strong National Bolshevik trends within Communism and National Socialism and on the traditional pro-Russian orientation among powerful groups of the German ruling classes.

August 6, 1943



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THE FREE GERMANY MANIFESTO AND THE GERMAN PEOPLE

SR
R+A # 1033

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Office of Strategic Services
Branch of Research and Analysis
Europe-Africa Division
Psychological Warfare Subdivision
Central European Section



2



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I. SUMMARY

- (1) This memorandum deals exclusively with the reception that the Free German Manifesto is likely to have in Germany. It does not deal with Russian-German relations and the aspirations of Russia in Central Europe. Nor has an attempt been made to study the reception of the Manifesto outside of Germany and among German refugee groups.
- (2) The Manifesto derives its strength from the fact that it offers the German people the prospect of national survival and independence after the termination of the war and the destruction of the Nazi regime. It does so by entrusting the German people itself with the task of overthrowing the Nazi regime and establishing a democratic government.
- (3) The Manifesto combines the democratic appeal with the desire for national self-preservation and independence, thus directing itself to all the potential anti-Nazi forces in Germany.
- (4) While this broad "united front" is not capable of providing a basis for a future Popular Front government in Germany, it may well constitute an effective force for the overthrow of the Nazi regime.
- (5) The democratic conception of the Manifesto contains enough revolutionary implications to re-activate the old left-wing anti-Nazi opposition among the German workers, especially the remnants of the CP.
- (6) The appeal to the longing for national survival and independence has, in conjunction with the genuine anti-Nazi opposition, no nationalistic or imperialistic implications.
- (7) The failure, however, to reach an understanding between the Western powers and Russia on post-war policy may swing the Free Germany movement into an alliance with those circles of the Army Command and the so-called "left-wing" Nazi leadership which prefer collaboration with Russia to British-American occupation. In this case, the Free Germany movement would revitalize "National-Bolshevik" sentiments.
- (8) Such sentiments were strong in the German CP in 1919, 1923 and from 1930-1932. Though the leaders of this line have been killed in Russia, a full-blown National Bolshevism may be used any time to entice the nationalistic youth and the army to join forces with the CP.
- (9) National Bolshevik trends within the Nazi Party are not represented in the present leadership with the possible exception of Erich Koch. The National Bolshevik ideology, however, still has undoubtedly a strong attraction with the youth and the intellectuals.
- (10) Between 1919 and 1933 three trends were operating in German foreign policy: the Western orientation (General Max Hoffmann, Hitler, Rosenberg), the Eastern

orientation (General Von Seeckt, V. Brockdorff-Rantzau, V. Maltzahn), and the bridge theory (Stresemann, Koch-Weser, the Social Democrats). The victory of the bridge theory was short-lived and bound up with a more or less stable political and social system. High officers and many of the conservatives favored, and may still favor, Eastern orientation.

(11) The most influential trend among the German underground movement is apparently towards a democratic socialism that is entirely independent of the Russian system. Only the fear of the dismemberment and enslavement of the Reich could drive the German masses into the Bolshevik camp.

The Manifesto by the National Committee of Free Germany ^{1/} is, if considered divorced from its political surroundings, a document of no prime political significance. Statements on Post-War Germany have been issued by many refugee groups, all of them unimportant. Three facts make this manifesto significant:

1. the backing it apparently received from Soviet Russia ^{2/};
2. the revolutionary implication of the manifesto;
3. its appeal to the desire for national self-preservation.

II. THE CONTENT OF THE MANIFESTO

1. The content of the Manifesto is at first sight not much different from that of the Weimar Constitution of 1919, in spite of the fact that the Manifesto declares that it "will have nothing in common with the helpless Weimar regime". It desires a "strong" government, a "strong democratic power", the "annulment of all laws based on national and racial hatred . . . of all measures of the Hitlerite authorities directed against freedom and human dignity, and the restoration of religious freedom. This means the reactivation of Articles 109 (equality before the law), 114, 115, 117, 118 (freedom of the person, of the home, of communications, of opinion), and Article 135 (of religion). It demands the "restoration and extension of the political rights and social gains of the working people", formerly contained in Articles 159 (freedom of trade union organizations), 165 (cooperation of labor organizations in the administration of the economy), 161 (maintenance of health and capability to work). The Manifesto promises the restoration of the freedom of economy, trade and handicraft; the guaranteed right to labor and to own lawfully acquired property - almost direct quotations from Article 153 (freedom of property), 152 (freedom of trade and industry), 164 (protection of the independent middle classes), 157 (labor power stands under the special protection of the Reich). The Manifesto is thus almost literally a summary of Part Two of the Weimar Constitution entitled "Fundamental Rights and Duties of the Germans", while the basic idea of Part One "Structure and Task of the Reich" is but scantily treated, since there is no mention of parliamentary organs.

2. The Manifesto, however, may have today a much greater significance than the Weimar Constitution ever had in its time.

a) The appeal to democratic memories and principles could by itself hardly have any effect in Germany. P/W interrogations show that only the politically conscious anti-Nazis criticize the regime on social and political grounds. The young generation knows nothing about democracy^{3/}, and the older one is probably still reminiscent of the impotence and failure of the Weimar Republic. The importance of the Manifesto consists in the fact that it shows

^{1/} Full, apparently authentic text in New York Times, August 1, 1943.

^{2/} The Pravda has accepted the manifesto, see Plain Moscow Aug. 2, 1943. This backing may be temporary and may be withdrawn as has been pointed out in report, "The Soviet Union and Free Germany", submitted jointly by the U.S.S.R. Division and Central European Section. This possibility will be discarded here.

^{3/} See especially Hitler: A Survey of P/W Opinion Secret B370 July 29, 1943

the democratic revolution as a way to terminate the war without losing national unity and independence. The Manifesto goes beyond the Unconditional Surrender by implying the preservation of Germany's national unity and sovereignty after the abolition of the Hitler system. In doing so, the Manifesto avoids the gravest mistake of our PW against Germany, namely, the failure to show the German people a way of terminating the war and overthrowing the Nazi regime without surrendering its national independence to a foreign conqueror. The Manifesto makes an ingenious use of our failure by telling the Germans that, if they continue to submit to Hitler, they will be inevitably defeated by our growing military power: "Hitler then will be overthrown only by the force of the coalition armies. But this will signify the end of our national independence and of our state existence, the dismemberment of our fatherland." If, on the other hand, the German people does not wait until the Wehrmacht is beaten, if the German army keeps its arms and turns them against the Nazi regime, it will, in beating Hitler, at the same time beat the enemies: the United Nations would not invade a democratic Germany which has eradicated the Nazi system. The fight against Hitler is thus presented as a fight for Germany's national self-preservation, as a war of social and national liberation.

b) The democratic appeal of the Manifesto is, however, not only tied up with the longing for national self-preservation, but also with the desire for far-reaching social changes. Every vestige of Marxism is carefully avoided, but the Manifesto has nevertheless definite revolutionary implications, which obtain additional weight through the Communist signers of the document. These implications are revealed in the sentences on the "confiscation of property of those responsible for the war and of the war profiteers," on the punishment of the instigators, ringleaders, and accomplices "behind the scene," in the appeal to the "working men and women on all fronts," in the exhortation to organize "fighting groups at the enterprises, in the villages, in the labor camps, in the universities." They are furthermore indicated by the explicit statement that the future German democracy "will have nothing in common with the helpless Weimar regime."

c) The Manifesto thus combines the national and the revolutionary appeal on a democratic basis, thereby utilizing the strongest interests and desires prevalent among the potential anti-Nazi opposition. In doing so, the Manifesto directs itself to the following groups:

3.

a) the workers, especially the politically trained older workers who will have no difficulties in recognizing the revolutionary content in the nationalistic form,

b) the small peasants, who have become increasingly resentful of the totalitarian regimentation of agriculture,

c) those strata of the middle classes which have been proletarianized in the process of total mobilization,

d) a large part of the intelligentsia,

e) the common soldiers,

f) certain high army circles which are favoring an understanding with Russia rather than with the Western powers (in this group might be included

the so-called "left wing" of the Nazi leadership and the SS).

There can be no doubt that these groups cannot form the basis for a future democratic government in Germany. The diverging interests of the workers, the middle classes, the officer corps, and the "left-wing" Nazi leadership cannot be united after the breakdown of the Nazi system any more than under the Weimar Republic. Consequently, the Manifesto refrains from any too explicit revival of the Popular Front conception and limits the "united front" to the task of overthrowing the Nazi regime. With this limitation, however, the Manifesto and the policy suggested by it is bound to have a considerable effect on all the beforementioned groups, chiefly on account of its emphasis on national self-preservation.

The appeal to national self-preservation is by no means an appeal to imperialistic or nationalistic tendencies. The protest against dismemberment of the old Reich (the Manifesto proclaims the renunciation of all conquests) and the insistence on national unity and sovereignty will be readily accepted even by the Socialist and Communist opposition. The Marxian tradition is probably still alive among the older generation of German workers, and in this tradition, national independence is one of the preconditions of social progress. The German people - like all civilized people - regard this right as an integral part of the right to shape its own destiny. The idea of national independence arose with the idea of democracy, and precisely the democratic forces have most strongly insisted on its realization. The United States and Great Britain have been considered in Germany as the model countries where democracy and national unity have been achieved. We can hardly blame the democratic forces in Germany for adhering to an ideal which we ourselves have realized and promoted. If this ideal is taken over and implemented by the genuine anti-Nazi opposition, there is no danger of its being abused for imperialistic aggression. Imperialistic nationalism is the characteristic of certain social groups whose interests are dependent on aggressive expansion (mainly the monopolistic strata of German industry, the Junkers and militarists); it is not to them that the Manifesto appeals; it rather calls for their "punishment" as the war profiteers and instigators.

4. There is one aspect of the Manifesto, however, which sounds a different appeal. It is directed not only to the German people but also to the British and American statesmen, challenging them to come out with a declaration of post-war policy toward Europe. If an understanding between the Western Powers and Russia cannot be reached, the "Free Germany" movement may become an instrument for power politics. The Manifesto contains a clear indication of that, in appealing to those army and party circles which may prefer a German-Russian coalition to British-American occupation. If the United Nations do not succeed in allying themselves with the genuinely anti-Nazi opposition in Germany, if they do not give the German people the chance of social as well as political reconstruction as a free democratic nation, then the Manifesto might easily become the first attempt to create a "National-Bolchevik" regime in Germany. For that it could revitalize a significant political trend on the Left as well as on the Right in Germany.

III. THE NATIONAL BOLSHEVIST TRADITION

National Bolshevism has two origins, one in the Communist Party, the other in the nationalistic organizations, especially the Free Corps. The first used nationalism as a means to seduce the nationalist youth into the communist camps, the second to draw communists into the nationalistic ranks.

1. National Bolshevism in the Communist Party

a) National Bolshevik trends became apparent at the time of the discussion of the Versailles Treaty. On May 13, 1919, the Comintern issued a manifesto entitled "Down with the Versailles Treaty". 1/ The CP leadership, especially Paul Levi and Karl Radek 2/ were compelled to attack the already existing trends towards National Bolshevism which became especially apparent in the Hamburg CP. 3/ Under Paul Levi's influence the ultra-Left (the National Bolsheviks and Syndicalists) was compelled to leave the party as an aftermath to the second illegally held party conference of the CP. Under his influence participation in the elections was decided and direct revolutionary action as advocated by the Hamburg group was rejected. The ultra Left opposition under the leadership of Laufenberg and Wolfheim formed the KAPD (Communist Workers Party of Germany) and soon lost influence completely. The eliminated radicals found, however, entrance into the CP when the party became what was then called a "revolutionary mass party." Though it is not our task to show the many changes through which the policy of the CP passed, a few incidents must be mentioned.

b) The National Bolshevik trends became predominant in 1923, a year characterized by two major events: the occupation of the Ruhr and the inflation. The slogan of the CP then was "Beat Poincare on the Ruhr and Cuno on the Spree". 4/ The fight of the CP was thus directed against French imperialism and the cabinet of Chancellor Cuno, who was undoubtedly a representative of German shipping and industrial interests. Actually, however, the CP directed its attack almost exclusively against France and supported the passive resistance of the German people. This was in line with Soviet Russia's foreign policy after the conclusion of the Rapallo treaty with Germany. Soviet Russia considered England and France as the protagonists of anti-Russian interventionism. The Comintern as well as the Central Executive Committee of the Russian CP thus protested against the Reich occupation. 5/ It is during that time that

1/ See Die Internationale, Vol. I, No. 11/12, pp. 244 seq.

2/ Die Internationale, Vol. I, No. 4, pp. 3 seq.

3/ See Arnold Struthahn, "Die Auswaertige Politik des deutschen Kommunismus und der Hamburger Nationale Bolshevismus" in Die Internationale, Vol. I, Nos. 17 and 18, pp. 340.

4/ See Rakosi in "Jahrbuch fuer Wirtschaft, Politik und Arbeiterbewegung" 1923-24 (official publication of the CP), Hamburg, 1924, pp. 17, and Thalheimer, pp. cit. p. 601.

5/ See Russian Information Review, Vol. 2, 1922-23, p. 244.

within the Communist Party the idea arose that Germany was a suppressed country and that consequently the Communists must assume the leadership in the struggle for national liberation. The CP deputy Dengel stated while surveying the political situation in 1923 in the 11th Party Congress of 1927 that a just war of national liberation would have been possible in 1923. 1/ In the course of the inflation, political and social antagonisms deepened in Germany. The petty bourgeois wavered, according to Communist conceptions, between Fascist and Communist sympathies. 2/

The CP believed that the time of a new revolution had arrived, and from the summer of 1923 on it became the rallying point of all discontented masses. Thousands entered the Communist Party. It is in these circumstances that the National Bolshevik theory and tactics were adopted. Rakosi praised it in 1923. 3/ Radek delivered a speech at the occasion of Schlageter's execution by the French. It is worthwhile remembering that Schlageter is one of the Nazis' most celebrated national heroes. Radek said: "The history of this martyr of German nationalism shall not be clothed in silence nor shall it be settled with a slighting phrase . . . Schlageter, the courageous soldier of the counter-revolution, deserves honor in a manly and honorable fashion by us soldiers of the revolution. . . . Only an alliance with the German working classes can liberate Germany from the yoke of imperialism." 4/

Radek's speech became the starting point for the National Bolshevik campaign. Count Reventlow was invited to write in the Rote Fahne. Lower CP officials went so far as to publish posters adorned with the Soviet star and the swastika and invited Nazis to speak in Communist meetings. Ruth Fischer, then a member of the Executive Committee of the CP, addressed the nationalist students in Berlin in the following way: "The German Reich . . . can be saved only if you, gentlemen of the German racial groups, recognize that you must fight jointly with the masses organized in the CP". She continued, "Whoever attacks Jewish capital . . . is already a class fighter even if he doesn't know it . . . Crush the Jewish capitalists, hang them on the lamp-posts, trample them". She ended by saying, "French imperialism is now the greatest danger in the world. France is a country of reaction. The German people can drive French capital from the Ruhr only in an alliance with Russia." 5/ The campaign had no success and the National Bolshevik line was dropped. It did not become a predominant feature of Communist policy until the very end of the Weimar Republic.

c) The elections of 1930 showed the growth of National Socialism, and the Communist Party desperately sought for a new political line which would allow them to counteract the growing influence of the National Socialist Party on the masses. The leadership went to Heinz Neumann, the most irresponsible Communist leader. Neumann directed the attack of the Communist Party almost exclusively against the Social Democrats who were labeled as

1/ Minutes of the Party Congress of 1927, p. 303.

2/ Thalheimer in "Jahrbuch fuer Wirtschaft, Politik und Arbeiterbewegung," 1923-24, p. 598.

3/ "Jahrbuch fuer Wirtschaft, Politik und Arbeiterbewegung", 1923-24, p. 26.

4/ Quoted by Georg Schwarz, Voelker, Hoeret, die Zentrale. KPD Bankrott, Berlin, 1933, p. 91.

5/ See Schwarz, op. cit., p. 92.

"Social Fascists." Slogans like "Drive the Social Fascists from their positions in the plants and factories", "Beat the Social Fascists" were formulated. Thaelmann himself said "Without being victorious in the fight against the social democracies, we shall not be able to beat Fascism". 1/ The Executive Committee of the CP adopted as late as September 1932 an anti-socialdemocratic resolution. 2/

At the same time the National Bolshevik line was rejuvenated under the auspices of Heinz Neumann. He addressed a Goebbels meeting in Berlin in the following way: "Young Socialists! Brave fighters for the nation! The Communists do not desire fraternal strife with the National Socialists." 3/ This time the Communists were successful to some extent. Lieutenant Scherlinger, whom the Supreme Court had sentenced to imprisonment for National Socialist activities within the army, was converted to Communism primarily under the influence of his fellow prisoner, the Communist Captain, Ludwig Renn. 4/ A number of other officers, especially of the Free Corps Band Oberland, also joined the CP.

The election manifesto of the Communist Party published on August 24, 1930 begins with the following words: "We shall tear up the thievish Versailles 'Peace Treaty' and the Young Plan which enslaved Germany. We shall annul all international debts and reparation payments". The manifesto ends with the words, "Down with the Young Plan! Down with the government of the capitalists and Junkers! Down with Fascism and social democracy! Long live the dictatorship of the Proletariat! Long live Soviet Germany!" The manifesto insists on the socialization of heavy industry, banks, large estates and big traders and officers, and on a union of all toiling masses on the basis of the broadest possible soviet democracy.

In his speech before the Executive Committee of the CP, April and May 1931, the then Party leader Thaelmann declared that the whole tradition of the CP was permeated by its fight against Versailles. He reminded the listeners of the policy of the Spartakus union and of the Ruhr struggle of 1923 and he did not concede a contradiction between the struggle for national liberation and proletarian internationalism. 5/

In February 1932 at the meeting of the Central Committee Thaelmann reiterated the position of the Communist Party in the following manner: "We are the sole party in Germany which really and with the greatest determination fights against the policy of fulfillment. . . . National liberation cannot be divorced from the social liberation of the toiling people, that is from the overthrow of capitalism. . . . One cannot fight against the Versailles system if one engages in violent baiting of the only government in the world which did not sign the shameful Versailles treaty. . . . The Hitler party will become the direct ally of Pilsudski's Poland which with her policy of the

1/ Die Internationale, Vol. 14, p. 492.

2/ Resolution of the Twelfth Ekki Plenum in Die Internationale, Vol. 15, p. 384.

3/ Schwarz, op. cit., p. 206.

4/ He is now one of the main members of the Free Germany movement in Mexico. He is an outstanding novelist and writer on military affairs. Renn is a pen name. He belongs to the German nobility.

5/ See Peter Maslowski, Thaelmann, Leipzig, 1932, p. 77.

Polish Corridor and in Upper Silesia where she enslaves and tortures German workers and peasants. . . . One cannot fight against the Versailles Treaty and the Young slavery without unfurling the banner of proletarian internationalism." 1/

d) This National Bolshevik approach was superseded by the doctrine of the "people's revolution" shortly before Hitler's access to power. This doctrine is outwardly incompatible with the old Bolshevik theory that revolutions are prepared by small groups of determined professional revolutionaries. The doctrine of the people's revolution, however, must be considered as a forerunner of the Manifesto of the Free Germany Committee. This doctrine was proclaimed for the first time in 1931. "The Communist Party . . . must organize the people's revolution against Fascism and economic castigation - that is its historic task." 2/ The program of the people's revolution, so another manifesto said, "will bring liberty to the toiling peasants." 3/

The crowning tactical step of the people's revolution doctrine was the Referendum in the summer of 1931 for the dissolution of the Prussian Diet with the aim of overthrowing the social democratic government of Braun and Severing. Though the Communist Party originally opposed the initiative sponsored by Nazis, Nationalists, and the Steel Helmet, Heinz Neumann succeeded in bringing the Communist Party behind the National opposition. Remmele, his second in command, 4/ supported Neumann. Thaelmann against his better insight was compelled to defend the inglorious Referendum.

Only in October 1932 did the Thaelmann group begin to attack the National Bolshevik line and the doctrine of the people's revolution. 5/

e) The Russians have killed almost all the advocates of this National Bolshevik line - Heinz Neumann, Remmele, Max Hoelz - and have thus shown, from 1933 to 1941, to have definitely rejected the National Bolshevik theory. Only in November 1932 was there a mass manifestation of Bolshevik and Nazi solidarity. The Berlin Transport Workers struck. The Social Democratic Trade Union outlawed the strike but the National Socialist Workers Cell Organization (N.S.B.O.) together with the Red Trade Union Opposition, carried the strike, supported it and succeeded in organizing sympathy of almost the whole Berlin population.

f) It follows from the above that the Communist Party has frequently attempted to exploit the nationalist traditions and longings among huge groups of the German people especially among the army and the intellectuals. It was unsuccessful from 1919 to 1933 because the Nationalists preferred to join the Nazi Party which, due to its predominantly nationalistic appeal, appeared to be a much more effective guardian of nationalistic aspirations. But the Nazi Party is in a state of disintegration and its power will decline with the decline of Germany's military fortunes. It is not impossible that this collapse of the Nazi Party may enable the Communist Party to organize better than ever before the genuine nationalistic passion inherent in the German youth, the German intelligentsia and the professional soldiers and officers.

1/ Maslowski, op. cit., p. 88

2/ Die Internationale, Vol. 13, p. 584.

3/ Maslowski, op. cit., p. 79.

4/ Remmele has been executed by the G.P.U. in Russia together with Heinz Neumann.

5/ See Thaelmann in Die Internationale, Vol. 15, p. 386.

2. National Bolshevik Trends in the Nazi Movement

a) National Bolshevik trends are not represented in the present Nazi leadership. It can even be said without exaggeration that Hitler established his total control over the Party primarily by the ruthless elimination of those who adhered to this doctrine that appeared to him the greatest impediment to the seizure, maintenance, and strengthening of the Party's control over the German Reich. It has elsewhere been pointed out ^{1/} that the turning point in the strategy of the Nazi Party was the fiasco of the Munich Putsch of 1923. The failure of this attempted overthrow of the established government by means of violence taught Hitler a lesson which he never forgot, the lesson, namely, that the Nazi Party can come to power only with the assistance of the most powerful ruling groups in Germany through Parliamentary processes. The subsequent history of National Socialism has amply demonstrated his conviction that he can retain power only by letting the ruling groups share in the spoils of peaceful and warlike exploitation of the German masses as well as those of occupied Europe. This insight led Hitler to a ruthless war against those who advocated some kind of a National Bolshevik program.

b) It is commonly believed that Goebbels and Ley are the two spokesmen of the so-called radical wing in the Nazi Party, a wing that would not hesitate to resort to Socialist and even Bolshevik measures if the power of the Nazi Party could thereby be maintained.

It is quite true that when Goebbels started his career within the Nazi Party he joined forces with Gregor Strasser, the leader of the Political Organization of the Party. Jointly with Gregor Strasser, Goebbels created and edited a semi-monthly periodical "Nationalsozialistische Briefe" (National Socialist Letters), not designed for public consumption. The first issue appeared on October 1, 1925, and the slogan was the "Reconciliation of Socialism with the East." The program of this group was formulated by Goebbels in the middle of 1925 in an article in the Voelkischer Beobachter ^{2/}, where the following statement appeared: "The future lies with the dictatorships of the Socialist idea." The Strasser-Goebbels group attacked Rosenberg's anti-Russian and anti-Semitic conceptions. It demanded eastern orientation of the Nazi Party, opposition to American and English imperialism and assistance to Russia's fight against this imperialism. Germany's place was on the side of Russia, Turkey, China, India, in short on the side of all those people which are hostile to Versailles. Russia therefore is the natural ally of Germany and it is nobody's concern how Russia is internally governed.

These views were supported by Gregor Strasser's brother, Otto Strasser, and by Count Reventlow, who belonged to the Deutsch Voelkische Freiheitspartei which had formed an alliance with the Nazi Party in March 1923.

c) The occasion for dealing the first blow to the National Bolshevik trend within the party was the Communist sponsored referendum for the expropriation of the princely houses. On February 14, 1925, Hitler called a

^{1/} Franz Neumann, Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism, New York, 1942, p. 41 and 42.

^{2/} Konrad Heiden, Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus, Berlin, 1933, p. 202, 203.

meeting of the party leaders to Bamberg. The northern Gaue were represented only by Gregor Strasser and Goebbels. Hitler succeeded, in spite of Strasser's opposition to commit the party to wholesale opposition to the Communist initiative by depicting it as Jewish engineered. Goebbels used this occasion to desert Strasser and to swing over entirely to Hitler's side. From that day on Goebbels as well as Ley have consistently followed Hitler's directives and that day created the deadly enmity between Goebbels and the Strasser brothers which led ultimately to Gregor Strasser's assassination on June 30, 1934. The Arbeitsgemeinschaft of the northern Gaue was dissolved.

d) The fight between the two wings, especially between the Strasser group and the Hitler majority, is well known. While Gregor Strasser finally accepted the leadership of Hitler, his brother Otto Strasser did not. He founded the "Fighting Community of Revolutionary National Socialists," later called Black Front, and submitted to the German public "Fourteen Theses of the German Revolution." 1/ These theses, though outwardly socialistic, do not contain any foreign political program except the demand for the unification of all Germans and the destruction of the Versailles Treaty. Otto Strasser has, however, exposed his foreign political views in his book "Structure of German Socialism" to which his famous discussion with Hitler is appended. 2/

The handing over of the trade unions to Ley's Labor Front instead of to the NSBO; the elimination of Roehm; the decline of the SA, -- all these are steps in the eradication of the so-called "socialist", that is National - Bolshevik wing of the Nazi Party.

The National Bolshevik doctrine had a deep fascination especially for nationalistic intellectuals. The most articulate post-war nationalist, Moeller von den Bruck, espouses these ideas in his Das Dritte Reich, (3rd edition, Hamburg, 1931), and in his lesser known but possibly more important book "Das Recht der Jungen Voelker". 3/ The only novelist of repute that National Socialism has produced, Ernst Juenger 4/ must be considered as the pathbreaker of National Bolshevism. 5/

The collapse of the Nazi system will again bring to the fore National Bolshevik trends that have heretofore been suppressed by the Nazi leaders.

The problem which the Nationalist movement faced in 1918 and 1919 will arise again. To the genuine Nationalist youth in Germany the solution of the problem after the defeat of National Socialism will be very different from what it has been after 1918. The Nationalist groups may point to the enormous internal and external strength of Bolshevik Russia. They may attribute this strength to the fact that the bourgeoisie has been eliminated in Russia and that, while the Nazis talk about the people's community, the Russians have established it by the extermination of their own industrialists, bankers, Junkers and middle classes. These groups, therefore, may attempt to

1/ Published in Mommsen and Franz, Die deutschen Parteiprogramme, Vol. III, Leipzig, 1931, pp. 116-117.

2/ Otto Strasser, Aufbau des Deutschen Sozialismus, 2nd edition, Prague, 1936, pp. 88-89.

3/ 1919, especially p. 101.

4/ Der Arbeiter, Herrschaft und Gestalt, 2nd edition, Hamburg, 1932.

5/ See also Franz Neumann, op. cit. pp. 139 to 199.

ally themselves with the German working classes, hoping to swing them into Nationalistic directions. They will strive to bring about a reconciliation of Nationalism and Bolshevism and they will orient their policy towards an understanding with Russia, hoping that with Russia's backing Germany can be restored to the position of a great power.

To sum up: although the National Bolchevik leadership in the Communist as well as in the National Socialist Party has been exterminated, a situation may well arise in which National Bolshevism ideas may again receive a powerful stimulus. Such a situation will occur if, after the breakdown of the Nazi regime, conditions are imposed upon Germany which will destroy her unity and independence as a nation. In this case, the German nationalists may succeed in exploiting the sentiments and desires of the German masses for a National Bolshevism policy. It is reported that, in anticipation of such a situation, important Nazi groups, especially among the SS, are already infiltrating into the Communist centers of resistance.

IV. THE ATTITUDE TOWARDS RUSSIA

1. Apart from the National Bolshevism tradition predominant in the radical Communist movement and among the nationalistic organizations, there is a very powerful pro-Russian trend which is quite independent of the internal structure of Russia. It is well known that for the conservatives the re-insurance treaty between Germany and Russia concluded between Bismarck and Schouvaloff on June 18, 1887 ^{1/} was the cornerstone of the conservative foreign policy and that the conservative opposition never forgave William II not to have renewed the re-insurance treaty.

At the end of the World War 1914-1918 three foreign political trends became apparent in Germany, the Eastern orientation, the Western orientation and the so-called Bridge theory. For the easterners, friendly relations with Russia were to enable Germany to get rid of the Versailles Treaty and to establish herself as a great power. To the westerners, the entrance of Germany in the concert of Western Powers was to provide the same result. The adherents of the third theory conceived Germany as a bridge between eastern and western Europe and hoped by careful juggling between the East and the West, by playing off Russia against France and England to achieve concession after concession.

2. The western orientation stems from Frederick List. ^{2/} It found its most powerful expression in the writings of General Hoffmann. ^{3/} According to Hoffman, the basic fact which the great powers in the world have to face is the crisis of industrialism intensified by Russia's elimination from the world economy and Bolshevism's fight against the fundamental interests of capitalistic society. The solution therefore is the destruction of Bolshevism and the re-integration of Russia into a world economy based on world economic collaboration and political integration of Germany, Great Britain, and France. ^{4/}

^{1/} Text in Pribram, *The Secret Treaties of Austria and Hungary*, Vol. I, p. 275.

^{2/} See on his doctrine Franz Neumann, pp. cit., pp. 105-106.

^{3/} Nowak (ed.) *Die Aufzeichnungen des Generals Max Hoffmann* (1929).

^{4/} Especially Vol. II, pp. 365-367.

Hoffmann desired to this end the financial and economic cooperation of the United States. It is this thesis which went into Hitler's "Mein Kampf" and into Alfred Rosenberg's mythology. It amounted to the suggestion of establishing a huge world trust directed against Soviet Russia.

4. This western school was, however, violently opposed by the army leadership, and by a number of industrialists and diplomats.

The position of the German army towards foreign policy has been formulated with utmost clarity in General Von Seeckt's book, "Germany between East and West." 1/ Seeckt considers the west, especially France, to be Germany's natural enemy. He therefore advocates collaboration with Russia in spite of all differences in internal systems and ideologies. There are, he says, "no antagonisms between Germany and Russia based on geography, history, and race." Russian State Socialism is "a purely internal affair". He advocates that German business expands into Russia and that it becomes "indispensable and liked in Russia". Bolshevism, he adds, is a "purely Russian product". "Bolshevism in Russia will not break down if we dissolve the treaties of Rapallo and Berlin; but we shall then have an enemy on our border whose impact on our internal situation will not be less . . . Our attitude towards Bolshevism has nothing to do with the possibility of economic and political cooperation". He is afraid of Germany's isolation and he believes that Germany will have to face two enemies if her political relations with Russia are not friendly. "We address German politicians: Keep me the back free."

There are many more of such proponents. 2/ It is well known that Count von Brockdorff-Rantzau passionately desired the alliance with Russia in order to fight the Treaty of Versailles and resigned office when he did not succeed in convincing the Weimar coalition, Social Democrats, Catholics and Democrats. Baron von Maltzahn, the head of the eastern department in the German Foreign Office, was a well known partisan of Seeckt and Brockdorff-Rantzau. Other German diplomats shared this view such as the well known Richard von Kuehlmann. 3/

The geo-politicians, whose influence on German foreign policy is, however, greatly over-estimated, were in favor of Russian-German collaboration, and Karl Haushofer has, during the German-Russian non-aggression pact, re-formulated the idea of the joint organization of the Russian-German space. 4/

4. It was the Social Democrats and the Liberals who sought to incorporate Germany into the concert of the Western Powers without alienating Soviet Russia. It is characteristic, however, that this policy could be carried out only during the time when the Weimar Republic appeared to be stabilized. Stresemann 5/ repudiated "the thesis that German foreign policy must have either a western or an eastern orientation." Erich Koch-Weser, the spokesman

1/ Deutschland zwischen West und Ost, 1933, especially pp. 31-41.

2/ See especially Wheeler-Bennett, From "Brest-Litovsk to Brest-Litovsk" in Foreign Affairs, 1939-1940, p. 196.

3/ Thoughts on Germany, 1932, pp. 310 and 311.

4/ Der Kontinentalblock (1941), pp. 15-16.

5/ Vermaechtnis, Vol. II, pp. 93-94.

of the German Democratic Party, 1/ took Stresemann's position and insisted that Germany's task is "to be the bridge between the east and the west." He expressly repudiated the eastern orientation. "It is impossible for Germany to carry out a policy of resistance against the west trusting in Russian assistance. Today Russia is not up to such a task. Should we be drawn, however, into a war between Russia and the Western Powers, a Russian victory may bring us freedom against the West but the inundation and subjugation by Bolshevism". The third conception of Germany's foreign policy, the bridge thesis, is today probably that doctrine which has the least support since liberalism in Germany, never powerful in history, has today but little appeal. It is known that Stresemann lacked support even by his own party and that his major support came from the Social Democratic party.

If the United Nations do not come out with a united policy Germany will again be compelled to choose between the east and the west. The eastern orientation has always been strong among the high officer corps and among the conservatives, but even groups in heavy industry which considered England to be the main competitor were striving for friendly relations with Russia. 2/

V. THE STRENGTH OF COMMUNISM AND OF OTHER ANTI-NAZI GROUPS

1. The last free Reichstag elections in Germany were held on November 6, 1932.

The result was:

	(NSDAP	196 deputies
Right(	Nationalists	52
	(German Peoples Party	11
	(Bavarian Peoples Party	20
Center(	Center Party	70
	(Democratic Party	2
	(Social Democrats	121
Left(	Communists	100

The elections of March 5, 1933 were no longer free. Terror had already started. The whole Communist and Socialdemocratic press was banned, and many communist deputies were either in SA barracks or in exile. Still the elections showed the following picture:

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- 1/ "Deutschlands Aussenpolitik in der Nachkriegszeit," in Harms (ed.): Volk und Reich der Deutschen, vol. 3 (1929), pp. 182-183.
 2/ See the discussion in Franz Neumann, op. cit., pp. 203-210.

	(NSDAP	288
Right	(Nationalists	52
	(German Peoples Party	2
	(Bavarian Peoples Party	18
Center	(Center Party	74
	(Democratic Party	5
	(Social Democrats	120
Left	(Communists	81

2. The number of communist voters in the last six months of the Weimar Republic was thus around six million. This figure is, however, highly deceptive, since the communist vote was subject to great fluctuations and corresponded in no way to the actual strength of the Party proper. Official communist estimates of party membership 1/ were as follows:

1919 -	90,000
1920 -	50,000 (KAPD - 38,000)
1921 -	78,000
1922 -	380,000
1923 -	267,000
1924 -	180,000
1927 -	150,000
1928 -	130,000
1930 -	120,000
1931 -	200,000
1932 -	320,000 <u>2/</u>

The CP has thus never been able to organize a considerable part of the working classes. The influence of the CP, however, went far beyond the membership, especially when the late Kurt Muenzenberg was put in charge of CP propaganda and covered Germany with a network of transmission-belt organizations.

3. The membership of the SPD vacillated around 1,000,000, 3/ but the SPD could count on the support of the Free (Socialdemocratic) Trade Unions. 4/ The Social Democratic Party, however, was in reality weak. It held no attraction for the youth. In 1930, the age composition of the SPD was:

1/ Walter Rist, "Der Weg der KPD" in Neue Blaetter Fuer den Sozialismus, vol. III 1932, pp. 79-91.

2/ This figure is questionable. It is quoted by Pjatnitzki, Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz, 1932, No. 32.

3/ 1,008,953 in 1931 see Jahrbuch der Deutschen Sozialdemokratie, 1931, Berlin, 1932, p. 109.

4/ 1931: 4,700,000 members.

25 years and under	7.82 percent
26-30 years	10.34 "
31-40 "	26.47 "
41-50 "	27.28 "
51-60 "	19.57 "
60-70 "	7.16 "
over 70 "	1.34 " 1/

The CP, on the other hand, had a great attraction for the youth and communist youth organizations (apart from the religious ones) were the only ones that allowed to the youth a broad enough field for activities.

4. There are other considerable differences. The dissolution of the SPD and of the trade unions came as an unexpected blow to the leadership which had done nothing to prepare for underground activities. The Executive Committee of the SPD had even refused to entertain such ideas as late as March 1933, while the Trade Union leadership tried to make peace with the new Nazi rulers.^{2/} The CP, on the other hand, at once started its underground activities for which it was trained many years ago and for which it had skilled Russian assistance.

Under the Nazi regime, the fates of the Social Democracy and of the CP were utterly different. The Social Democratic membership displayed considerable resistance against the pressure of Nazism. No SPD and no union leader of repute has joined the Nazis,^{3/} and the older ranks of the memberships were almost immune to the lure of Nazism.

5. Some Communists, however, joined the Nazi movement, especially members of the RFB, the Red Front Fighting League, which was shot through with gangsters. On the other hand, the underground CP organization was the most active underground movement.

Ps/W interrogations indicate:

- a. that the CP underground still is the most important organization;
- b. that the Communist Youth Organization is still the most active youth underground;
- c. that, however, Gestapo agents have found entrance into the CP underground.^{4/}

While the CP thus is the best organized and strongest underground group in Germany, the appeal of Russian Communism has not increased and may even have decreased.

^{1/} Jahrbuch der Deutschen Sozialdemokratie, 1930.

^{2/} Neumann, op. cit., pp. 413-414.

^{3/} There are but a few exceptions, mostly from the ADGB, the Federation of Socialist Unions, and then not leaders but employees, and from the white collar unions, also employees.

^{4/} See i.e. OSS document L 13297 and the study of the Central European Section of the OSS, July 20, 1943, Report on Prisoner of War Interrogations: Opposition to the Nazis.

5. The esteem for Communism among the German workers rose considerably during the Spanish Civil War - a crucial period in Europe; it declined sharply during the German-Russian non-aggression pact, and climbed steeply with the decline of Germany's military fortunes on her Eastern Front.

These pro-Soviet sentiments are, however, counteracted by two basic factors: the low esteem in which the CP leadership is held ^{1/} and the fear of Russian domination over Germany. This fear is probably the most important single psychological factor inside of Germany. It has two causes:

1. the feeling of guilt; and
2. the fear of economic reparations.

Nazi terror in occupied territories aims not only at intimidating the opposition but at making all Germans participate in the commission of terror acts so as to create a collective feeling of guilt and collective responsibility for crime. ^{2/} The Nazis have largely succeeded in this and Ps/W interrogation abounds in statements that the Germans fight supremely well in Russia because they are afraid of retribution for their crimes.

They are also afraid of the post-war period. "Enjoy the War, Peace will be terrible" is a famous German slogan. This applies to the relations with Russia even more than to those with the Allies. The destruction wrought in occupied Russia must be paid some day by Germany. How can it be paid - so they may argue - except by German slave labor if Germany's industrial equipment should be badly damaged by air attacks?

The Manifesto tries to allay these fears.

6. The SP and Trade Union leaderships are probably the most discredited leaderships of any German democratic organization. The SPD and the trade unions wielded power - the CP not. The SPD ruled Prussia until July 20, 1932; it continually boasted of its strength. ^{3/} It was the only great party fully committed to the defense of the Republic. The Weimar Republic may even be considered the creation of the SPD. And yet it failed completely to adopt its policy to the new requirements.

This does not mean that the democratic spirit is dead. The idea of a democratic socialism exists, and may now be stronger than it ever was. ^{4/} There certainly will have arisen a new leadership among the many localized groups in Germany not burdened by the failure of the old leadership.

The SPD and trade union influence in Germany must not be under-estimated for another reason, though the SPD groups may be much less organized than the CP. The age composition of the SP may even prove to be advantageous

^{1/} See sources on preceding page.

^{2/} See OSS Central European Section "The Nazi Defeat in Tunisia, the Coming Invasion of Europe and our PW."

^{3/} See F. Neumann, op. cit. p. 412/3.

^{4/} See the above mentioned Ps/W interrogations.

today. Of 28,000,000 workers and salaried employees employed today approximately 11,200,000 are foreign workers, which leaves approximately 17,000,000 Germans. Of these, at least 11,000,000 are women, which leaves only 6,000,000 male Germans. Among these, the huge majority are 40 years and over; that would cover the age groups 31-50 years mentioned on p. 30, that is, those age groups which are most strongly imbued by the Social Democratic tradition. But numerical strength is not identical with real strength. The Communist groups in Germany are certainly small, probably not exceeding 30,000 - 40,000. But their thorough indoctrination, their tight organization and the backing that they may obtain from Russia - all this makes them the potential leaders in the period of military and political collapse. Spontaneous uprisings are of great importance, but spontaneity evaporates if it is not channelled into an organization and a definite policy. Today, the Communist groups are potential leaders of the spontaneous opposition in Germany. This idea which has been insisted upon by the Central European Section time and again is confirmed by Ps/W interrogations.

The fear of Soviet Russia will then be subordinated to the desire to remain an independent nation and to assure to the Germans an adequate standard of living, political, social and economic security.

7. Many of the industrialists must realize that a victory of Great Britain and the United States may mean the end of Germany's industrial expansion and may even lead to a considerable contraction of economic activities. High officers may realize that with the economic isolation of Germany her military destruction is indissolubly bound up. Without an expanding economy modern armies cannot be maintained. The army may again become a small professional army without adequate combat weapons. Industrialists and high officers, however, may be convinced that Russia may not desire a Communist Germany for reasons which cannot be discussed here but that an alliance with Russia may give to German industry considerable opportunities for expansion. The officers' corps may convince itself that Russia may desire a strong Germany against possible intervention by France, England and America. If England and America should support Poland's claims for Germany's Eastern provinces, these groups will still more be driven into the camp of Russia hoping to avert the dismemberment of Germany by placing themselves wholly at Russia's disposal.

It follows from the above that there is no pro-Russian sentiment among the large masses of the people, that Communist sympathizers, Social Democrats and Catholics and liberals would prefer leadership by the Allied powers than submission to Russia, provided that this leadership does not destroy Germany's national unity and independence.

There is much less resistance to cooperation with Soviet Russia among groups of German industries and the high officers' corps.

In default of such leadership all groups with the possible exception of practicing Catholics and Junkers, will try to establish cooperation with Soviet Russia basing their policy on the strong National Bolshevik trends within Communism and National Socialism and on the traditional pro-Russian orientation among powerful groups of the German ruling classes.